

Presenters short biographies

Tuesday, October 21

Paul MacKinnon

Paul MacKinnon was appointed President of the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) on January 27, 2024. Prior to joining the CFIA, Paul served as Deputy Secretary to the Cabinet (Governance) at the Privy Council Office (PCO), the Executive Vice-President of the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA). He played a key role in leading Canada's management of the border for both travel and trade during the COVID-19 pandemic, working to support Canadian businesses by ensuring that pathways for the exporting and importing of goods remained open. He has also held senior management positions at Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada and Public Safety Canada.

Paul has a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from the University of Prince Edward Island.

Heath MacDonald

The Honourable Heath MacDonald was elected as the Member of Parliament for Malpeque in September 2021. He served as a member of the Standing Committee on Finance, the Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-Food, and the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security. Following his re-election in April 2025, he was named to the Cabinet as Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food in May 2025.

Prior to serving at the federal level, Minister MacDonald was first elected to the Legislative Assembly of Prince Edward Island in May 2015, representing District 16, Cornwall – Meadowbank. Minister MacDonald has over 20 years of experience in the private sector, with a focus on the tourism industry, and was the President and co-founder of an IT company.

Steve Côté

Steve joined the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) in 2002 in the Plant Protection Division working on domestic, import, and export phytosanitary issues. He also has experience working with the CFIA and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada on various market access issues. Since 2018, Steve has been the national manager of the International Phytosanitary Standards Section of the Plant Export Division. In this role, Steve is responsible for overseeing CFIA's engagement in the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) and the North American Plant Protection Organization (NAPPO).

Steve previously served as a member of the NAPPO Advisory and Management Committee (AMC) and was involved in the development and revision of various NAPPO Regional Standards for Phytosanitary Measures. He is currently a member of the IPPC Standards Committee which is responsible for overseeing the IPPC standard-setting process, managing the development of international standards for phytosanitary measures (ISPMs), and providing guidance and oversight to the work of technical panels and expert working groups. In June 2023, Steve was named Canada's representative on the NAPPO Executive Committee.

Hannah Fraser

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Javier Trujillo

Javier began his professional career in phytosanitary regulation programs at the Mexican NPPO where he worked for 30 years. During this time, he held the position of National Plant Protection Officer for 15 years, while representing his country as a member of the NAPPO Executive Committee.

Regarding the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) activities, he represented Latin America as a member of the Bureau for three periods and was Chair of the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (CPM) from 2018 to 2021.

In 1987, he obtained his PhD at the University of California, Berkeley. While he was a graduate student at UC Berkeley, he had the opportunity to work on sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) programs, where he was able to appreciate and master the operation of phytosanitary regulatory programs from a different operational perspective to those in Mexico.

After completing his regulatory career and establishing strong links with industry stakeholders in the three NAPPO member countries, he decided to apply for the NAPPO position. He is motivated to extend his professional life to leverage his vast experiences to benefit plant health in the NAPPO region.

Francisco Ramírez y Ramírez

Mr. Ramírez y Ramírez is an agronomist specializing in parasitology from Chapingo Autonomous University. He has 37 years of professional experience in phytosanitary issues at the state and federal levels, having occupied several high-profile positions in the Plant Health General Directorate at SENASICA.

He served as director of the National Phytosanitary Reference Center where he was responsible for the development and deployment of the National System for Phytosanitary Epidemiological Surveillance (SINAVEF); later, he assumed the General Directorate for Agriculture and Livestock in San Luis Potosí. Most recently, Francisco worked at the Directorate for Domestic Fruit Fly Programs where he focused on the implementation of fruit fly free areas and maintaining Mexico's Mediterranean fruit fly-free status.

In 2017, he received the Plant Health National Award for Phytosanitary Merit. Francisco is Mexico's representative on the NAPPO Executive Committee.

Jessica Mahalingappa

Associate Deputy Administrator, United States Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Plant Protection and Quarantine, International Phytosanitary Management & Standards Programs Jessica provides executive-level management to harmonize international rules of trade to prevent the introduction and spread of invasive pests and diseases; facilitate safe trade; and to establish fair, science-based plant health requirements for imported and exported plant commodities. Jessica is the U.S. representative to the NAPPO Executive Committee.

Andrew Morse

Andrew completed an M.Sc. in Environmental Biology from the University of Guelph in 2009. Andrew's thesis work focused on pollination of greenhouse crops, and the impact of floral volatiles on pollinator foraging decisions.

Andrew began working with Flowers Canada Growers in 2011 through two projects related to management of phytosanitary risks – one focusing on Chrysanthemum White Rust and the other focusing on soil contamination in international shipments of flower bulbs. In 2015 Andrew was named one of Greenhouse Canada Magazine's "top ten under forty", and was promoted to Executive Director of both Flowers Canada Growers and Flowers Canada (Ontario).

Andrew has worked to represent Canadian flower growers through partnering with regulators on a wide array of issues aimed at improving both regulatory compliance and business success.

Andrew has contributed to numerous regulatory consultations, participated in collaborative development of industry training and certification programs, and continues to engage with both industry stakeholders and government partners in Canada and abroad.

Mario Puente

Mario has 20 years of experience in phytosanitary policies, standards, and regulations for the international trade of agricultural commodities. He held several positions within Mexico's NPPO (SENASICA). He also worked for the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), coordinating plant health projects.

He presently holds the following positions:

- Executive Director for the Mexican Seeds Association (AMSAC)
- Vice-chair for the National Agricultural Council (CAN), Agri-Food Health and Safety
- Mr. Puente serves as Mexican industry advisory group representative for the North American Plant Protection Organization (NAPPO).

Brad Gething

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Sam Bihsop

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Stephanie Dubon

PPQ NAPPO Technical Director, United States Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Plant Protection and Quarantine, International Phytosanitary Management & Standards Programs Stephanie coordinates and oversees the APHIS participation in the NAPPO standard-setting program and helps advance U.S. harmonization priorities at NAPPO. Stephanie is the U.S. representative to the NAPPO Advisory and Management Committee.

Dominique Pelletier

Dominique Pelletier, is the National Manager of the Forestry Section at CFIA with over 20 years in plant health. He has worked on many international initiatives through IPPC and NAPPO and has been the North American representative on the Implementation and Capacity Development Committee, which he is currently chairing, for the past 8 years.

Barb Peterson

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Alonso Suazo

Alonso is the NAPPO Technical Director since July 2016. Before NAPPO, Alonso worked for five years as the State Regulatory Entomologist with the North Carolina Department of Agriculture, where he was responsible for the coordination, implementation, and supervision of multiple state and federal programs aimed at protecting the state's agriculture and forest resources from invasive insect species.

Alonso has also developed New Pest Response Guidelines for the US Department of Agriculture-Animal Plant Health Inspection Services (USDA-APHIS) on forest pest species of concern to the United States and worked on research in multiple areas including population genetics of Africanized honeybees, development of chemical attractants for the small hive beetle *Aethina tumida* a pest of honeybees, biological control of the Mexican bromeliad weevil *Metamasius callizona*, and gene mapping of aphid resistance genes in lupin *Medicago truncatula*.

Alonso also has experience in international consultancy work in beekeeping, outreach, and teaching. He graduated with a general degree in Agriculture at the Panamerican School of Agriculture in Honduras and a PhD in Entomology at the University of Florida.

Jaime Aalbers

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Alexander Blain

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Bob Baca

Dr. Bob Baca works for the U.S. Department of Agriculture and is the chair of the Expert Group on Alternatives to Methyl Bromide. He is also the USDA's representative to the Montreal Protocol, where he maintains access to the fumigant for quarantine use and international trade.

Bruno Gallant

Senior Legislative Officer, Canadian Food Inspection Agency's Invasive Alien Species and Domestic Programs Bruno is a Senior Legislative Officer with the Canadian Food Inspection Agency's Invasive Alien Species and Domestic Programs section. Since joining the CFIA in 2006, he has been involved in designing, developing, and implementing plant health programs, as well as engaging in national, regional, and international initiatives related to CFIA's plant protection mandate.

Tyrone Jones

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Jon Daniels

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Christian Dellis

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Alexandra Graham

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Noureddine Meraihi

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Dawn Hall

Dawn Hall is a Senior Advisor on the Responsible Data and AI team at the Office of the Chief Information Officer at Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat in the Government of Canada. Dawn is part of a team that sets policy and provides guidance for the [responsible use of artificial intelligence \(AI\)](#) and ethical use of data across the federal government. Prior to her current role, Dawn worked on GC-wide data strategy and governance and has experience in science communication, having previously obtained a PhD and postdoctoral training in plant biochemistry.

Kellyn Babbitt

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Angela Murray

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Cheryl Corbett

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Ruojing Wang

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Thomas Anneberg

Insert details

María Galindo

Insert details

Jessica May

Insert details

OIRSA

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EPPO

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Lisa Winthrop

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Etienne Lepage

Etienne holds a PH.D in Biochemistry from Université de Montréal, with a specialization in plant biology. After being selected in the Recruitment of Policy Leader program in 2014, Etienne joined AAFC to work as part of the science and policy integration team. From 2018 to 2020, Etienne was the senior analyst responsible for the Accelerated Staffing Initiative, which enabled to significantly transform the science capacity at AAFC, by increasing the capacity in key emerging areas of science, including big data, agroecology, and advanced biotechnology. Since then, he played a central role in the development and implementation of AAFC's Strategic Plan for Science, which helps guide resource allocation and prepare the agricultural sectors for the challenges of today and tomorrow. He is now the acting director of the Science and Policy Integration at AAFC.

Patricio De La Rosa

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